

# *City of Taunton*

## *Office of the Mayor*

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **TAUNTON INTRODUCES COMMONWEALTH CONNECT APP**

On Tuesday the City of Taunton, in conjunction with Secretary of Administration and Finance Glen Shor, officials from the City of Boston, and local officials from participating municipalities, formally launched the Commonwealth Connect app used by 54 cities and towns across the Commonwealth.

The smart phone application is based on the Citizens Connect app developed for use by the City of Boston and allows residents to report quality of life problems, such as graffiti and potholes, in real time directly to their local government for resolution. The Commonwealth Connect app is now used by 54 cities and towns across the commonwealth.

“My Administration quickly realized the importance in this opportunity to improve the way we interact with our residents,” Mayor Hoye said. “I would like to thank the Patrick-Murray Administration and Mayor Menino for their leadership, as well as the City of Taunton Department of Public Works and Board of Health for their willingness to utilize this program.”

To use Commonwealth Connect, residents with smart phones download the app (free of charge) called See Click Fix, snap a photo of a problem and submit it to their local government. The residents get a tracking number for their case and can see when their issue is resolved. Commonwealth Connect is also available on the City of Taunton website, making it easy for residents to report issues on-line as well.

The City of Taunton has launched the program targeting three types of service requests; missing street signs, potholes and trash issues. “Once our departments become familiar with the system we will add additional service request types and expand its use to other departments,” Mayor Hoye added.

Commonwealth Connect is made possible by a Community Innovation Challenge (CIC) Grant provided by the Patrick Administration awarded to the City of Boston. The City of Taunton Mayor’s

Office applied for the grant through the City of Boston. The award allows the City of Taunton to use the Commonwealth Connect app, training and support free of charge for three years.

“It’s imperative we look to innovative solutions to make our government sustainable in the future. This is a perfect example of how technology can improve the way we interact with the public to build a cleaner, safer community,” Hoyer added.

Launched in the FY12 budget and administered by the Executive Office for Administration and Finance, the CIC Grant program invests in innovations that have the potential to lower costs and improve critical services through regionalization, new uses of technology, and improved management practices.

The Commonwealth Connect app works on both iPhones and Android phones for free from the app store. Individuals without smartphones can still take advantage of submitting and tracking service requests through the City of Taunton website

“Commonwealth Connect makes it even easier for residents and government to partner on creating great neighborhoods,” said Boston Mayor Thomas M. Menino. “I am appreciative of the Commonwealth’s leadership and support on this project, scaling an approach that’s working well in Boston to municipalities across the State.”

Commonwealth Connect was developed in partnership between the City of Boston and its vendor SeeClickFix. Based in New Haven, CT, SeeClickFix is one of the pioneers of apps and services that allow residents to act on issues they see in their neighborhoods.

Participating municipalities include Andover, Ayer, Barnstable, Bedford, Boston, Braintree, Brookfield, Chelsea, Chicopee, Chilmark, Clarksburg, Eastham, Easton, Everett, Fall River, Fitchburg, Framingham, Franklin, Halifax, Haverhill, Holliston, Hopkinton, Lexington, Lowell, Malden, Medway, Melrose, Middleborough, Nantucket, Needham, New Bedford, Newton, North Adams, North Andover, Northampton, Orange, Quincy, Randolph, Revere, Royalston, Saugus, Seekonk, Somerville, Sudbury, Swampscott, Taunton, Wakefield, Ware, Watertown, West Boylston, Westborough, Whitman, Woburn, and Worcester.

### **About the CIC Grant Program**

In the FY12 budget, Governor Patrick proposed the development of the CIC grant program to encourage and incentivize regionalization and other innovative efficiency initiatives. The CIC grant program was supported by the Legislature, providing \$4 million for regionalization and other initiatives that will improve the effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of local services. An additional \$2.25 million in funding for the program was provided in the FY13 budget.

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